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**Kanbara et al.**

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(54) **AUGER SNOW BLOWER**

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(\*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 54 days.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

In an auger snow plow, right and left forward rotating augers and right and left backward rotating augers are disposed on a same axis and aligned in a width direction of an auger housing. A blower housing is disposed at a rear portion of the auger housing and also positioned at a widthwise center of the auger housing. A blower is disposed inside the blower housing. The right and left forward rotating augers are positioned at least in an entire range of a width of the blower housing. The right and left backward rotating augers are separately positioned on both sides of the right and left forward rotating augers and positioned only at a more outer side than the width of the blower housing in the width direction.

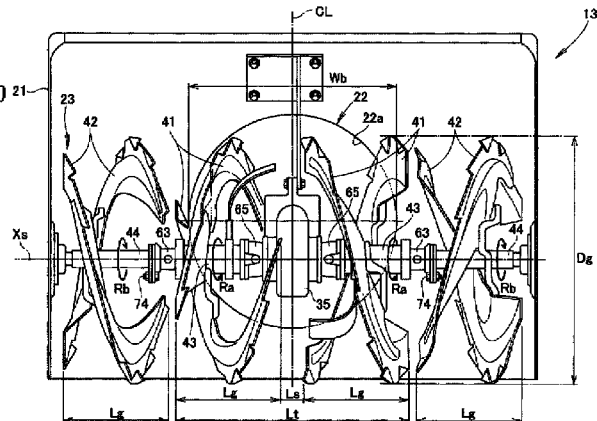
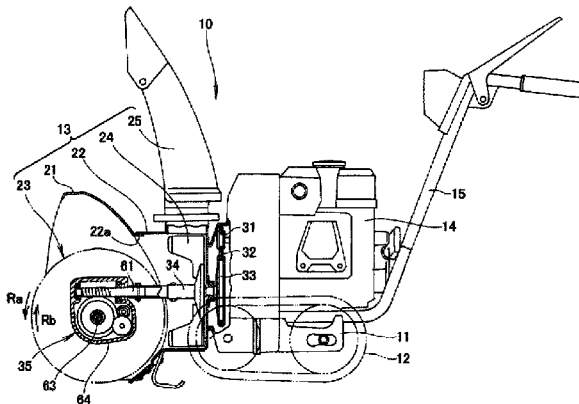
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CPC . **E01H 5/098** (2013.01); **E01H 5/08** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**  
CPC ..... E01H 5/04; E01H 5/0761; E01H 5/098;  
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See application file for complete search history.

**3 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets**



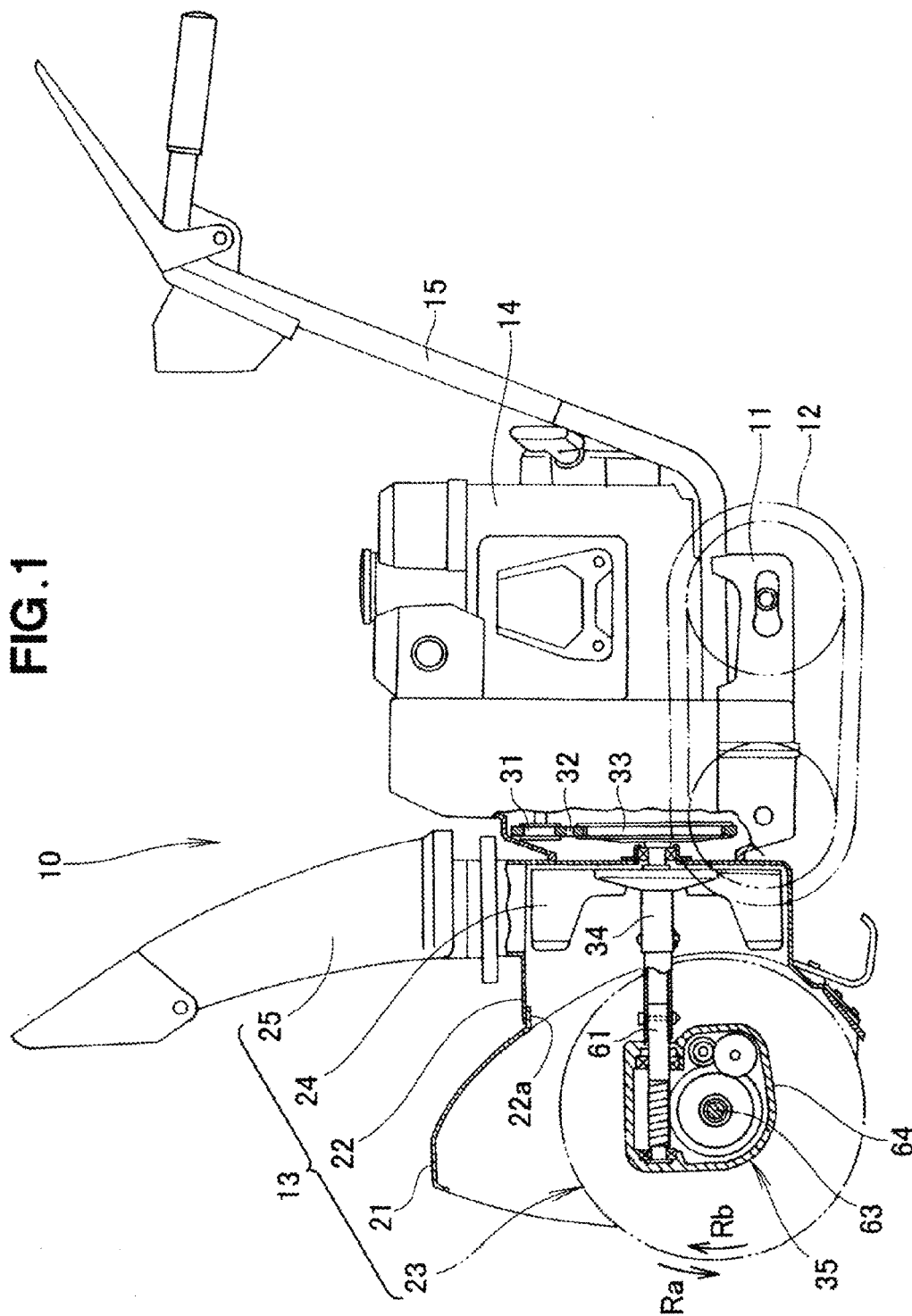


FIG. 2

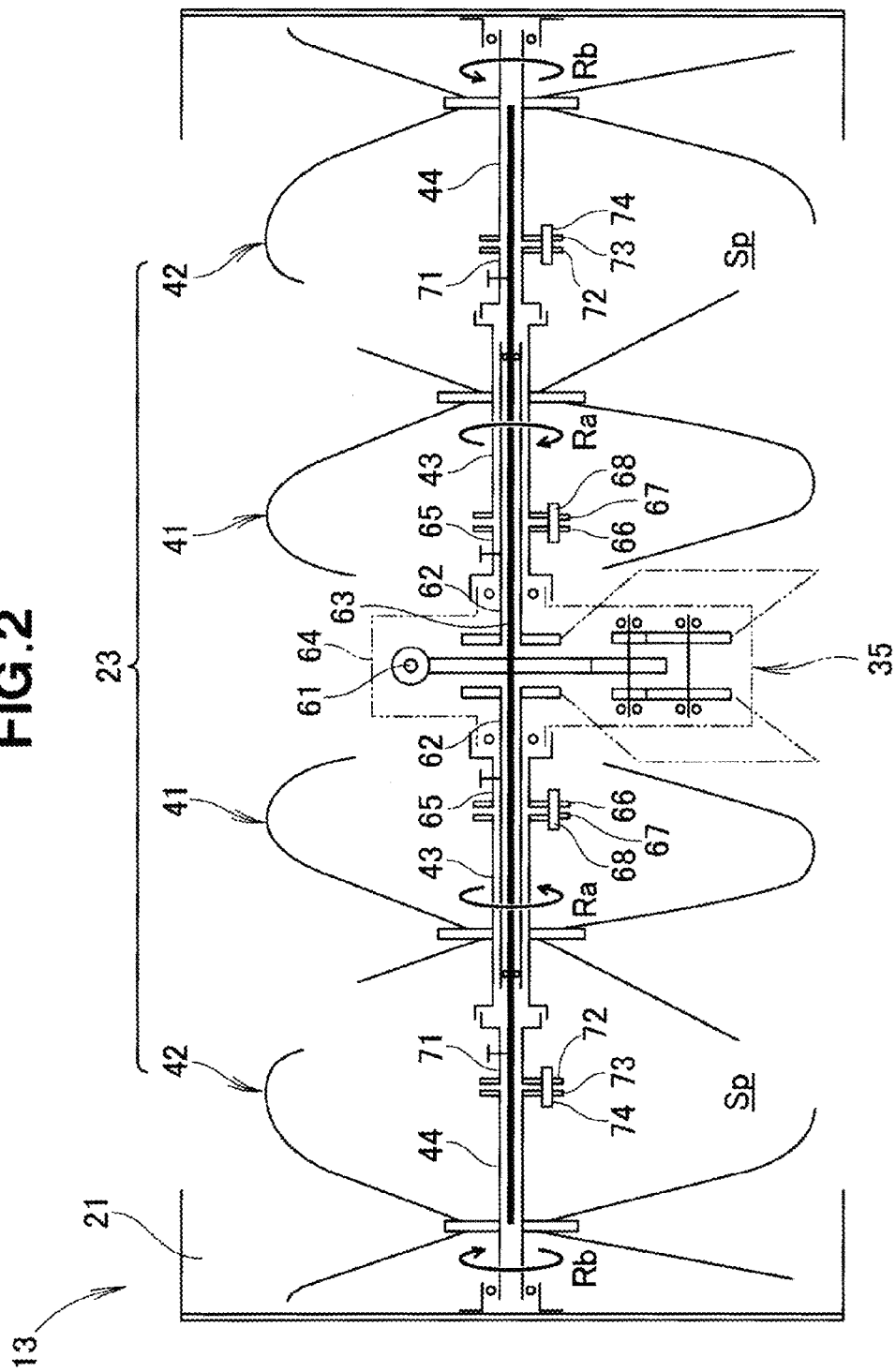
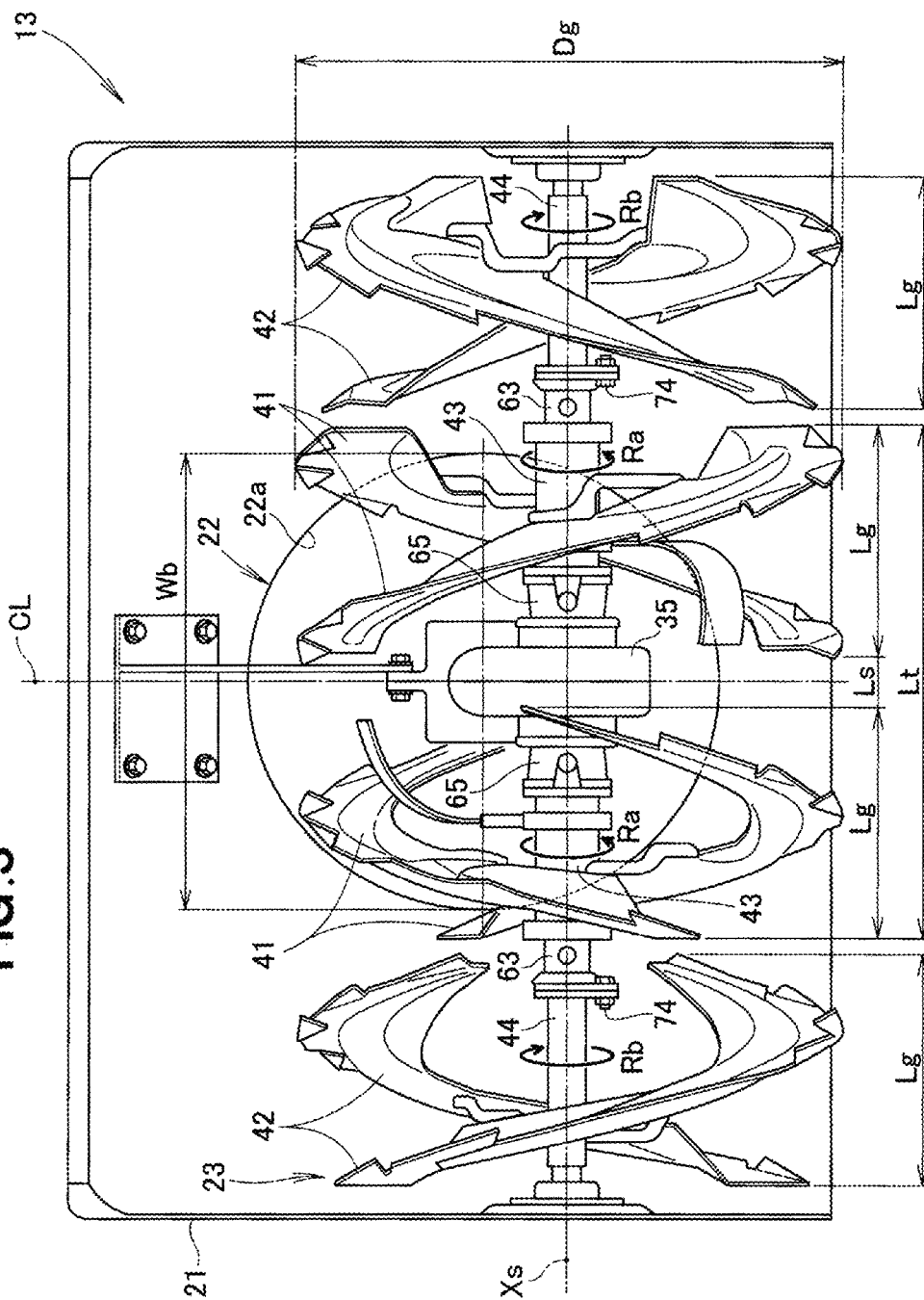


FIG. 3



**FIG. 4.**

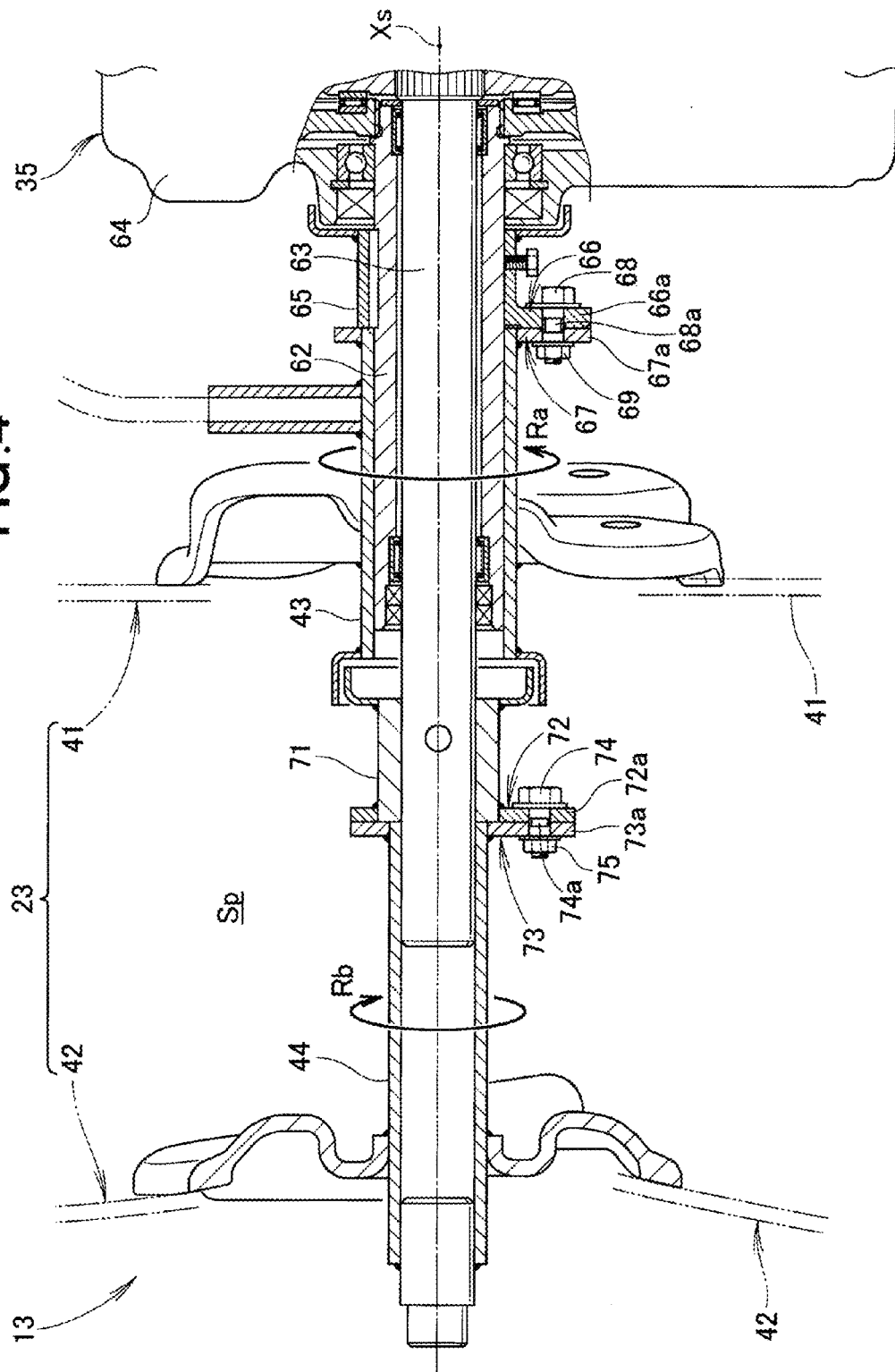


FIG. 5

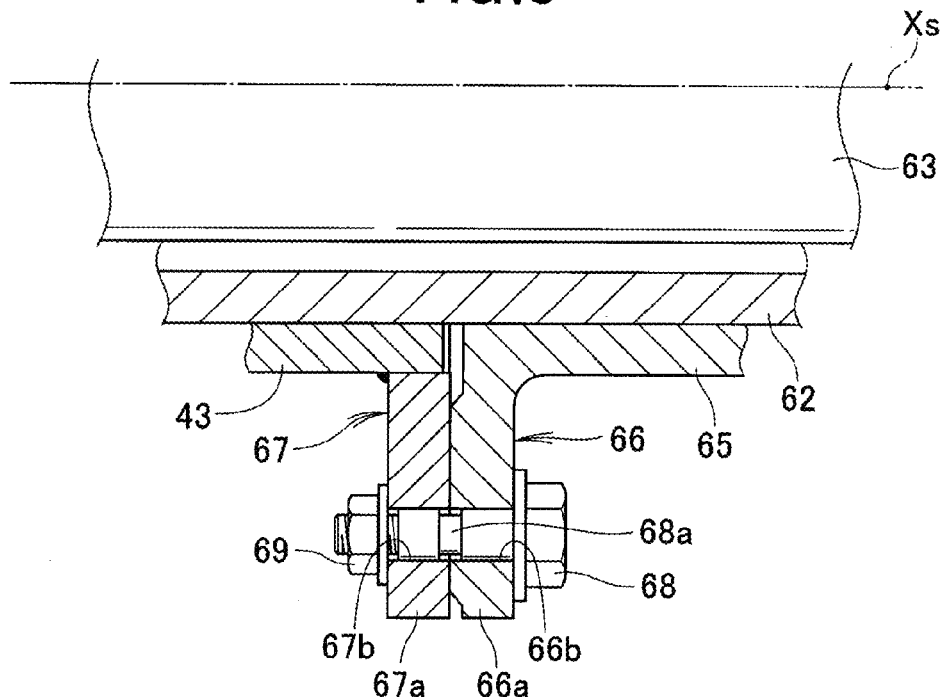
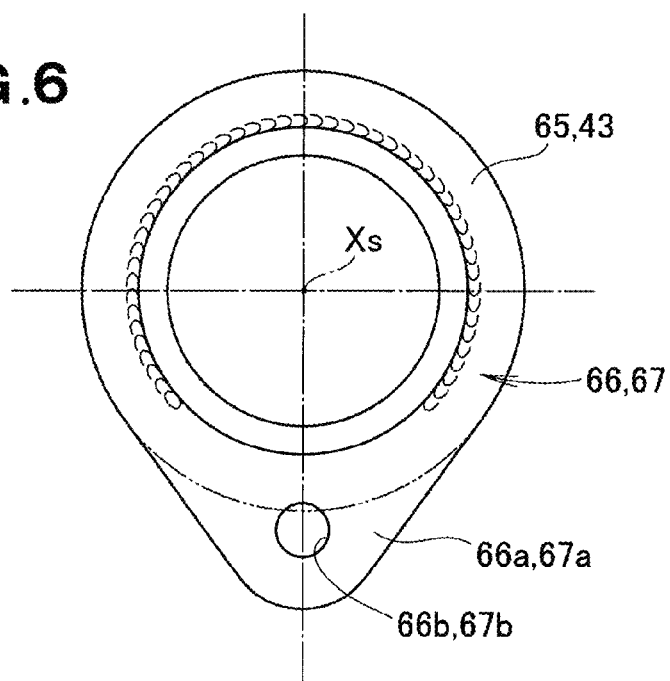
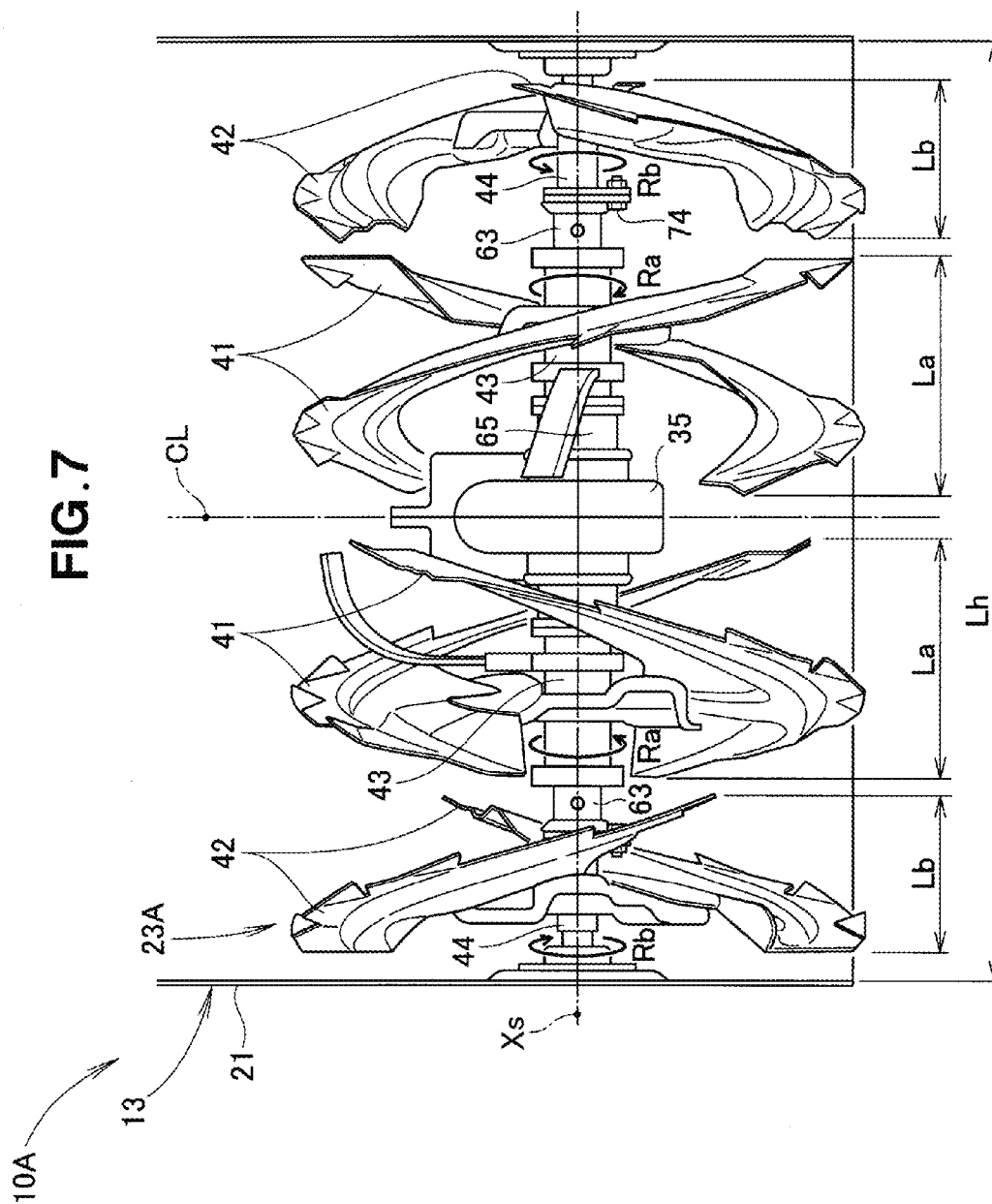
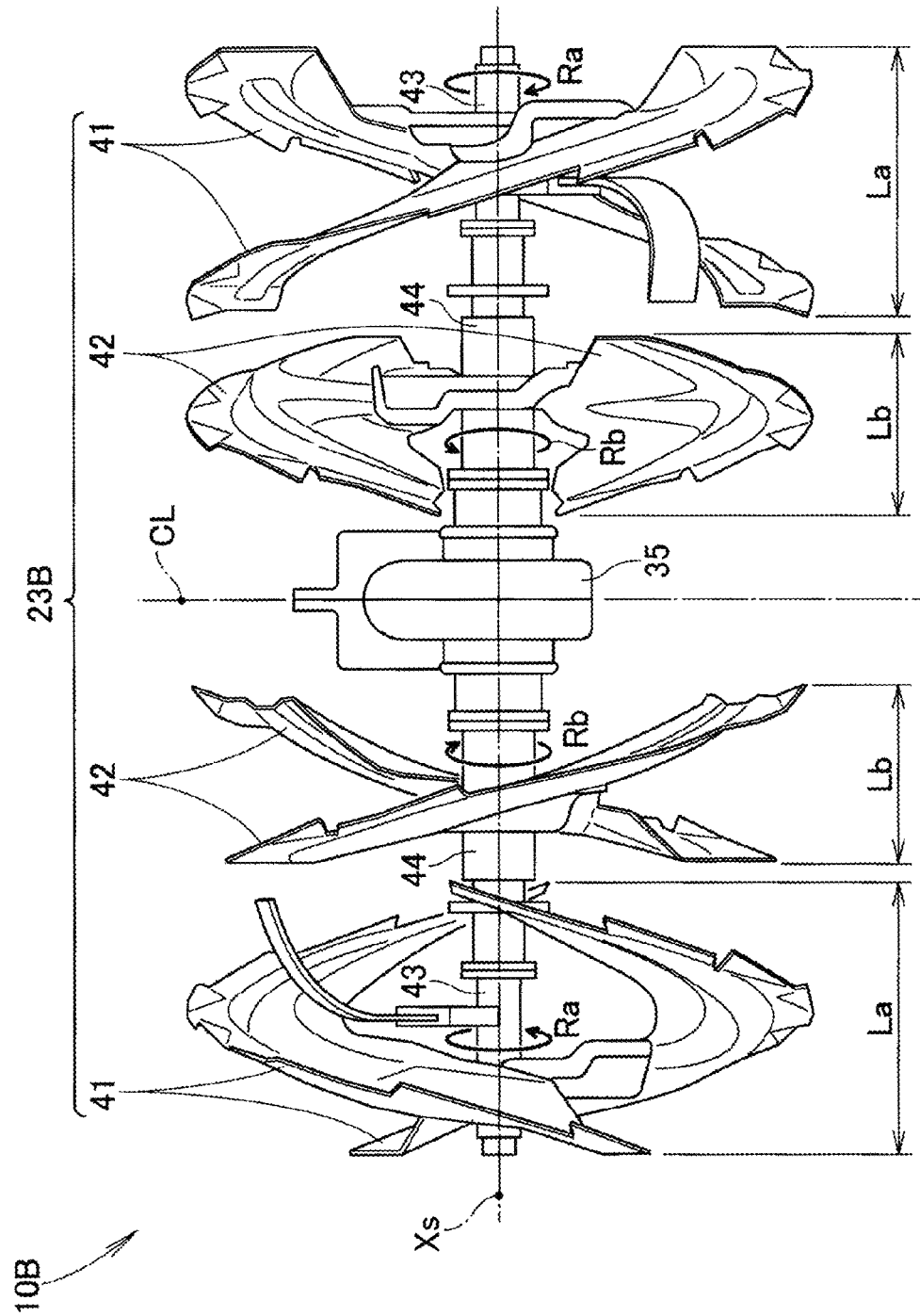


FIG. 6





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**AUGER SNOW BLOWER****FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

The present invention relates to an improved technology  
for an auger section of an auger snow blower.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

Among snow blowers, there is an auger snow blower in  
which an auger housing is mounted on a front portion of a  
machine body. The auger housing includes an auger. The  
auger snow blower collects snow by the auger mounted on the  
front portion while traveling forward, and blows the collected  
snow away by a blower via a shooter. This kind of auger snow  
blower is known, for example, as disclosed in Japanese Patent  
Application Laid-open Publication (JP-A) No. 2004-360379.

In the auger snow blower disclosed in JP 2004-360379 A,  
right and left forward rotating augers and right and left back-  
ward rotating augers that rotate in a direction reverse to the  
right and left forward rotating augers are disposed on a same  
axis and aligned in a width direction inside the auger housing.  
A blower housing is disposed at a rear portion of the auger  
housing and also positioned at a center of the width direction  
of the auger housing. The blower housing includes a blower  
inside thereof.

The right and left forward rotating augers and the right and  
left backward rotating augers mutually rotate in the opposite  
directions. Therefore, an upward reaction force generated at  
the right and left forward rotating augers can be cancelled by  
a downward reaction force generated at the right and left  
backward rotating augers. Accordingly, a lifting phenomenon  
of the respective augers can be prevented, and stability of  
snow removal executed by the auger snow blower can be  
improved.

However, the auger snow blower is required to have not  
only stability of snow removal but also efficiency of snow  
removal and there is room for further improvement in effi-  
ciency of snow removal.

Further, at the time of snow removal, snow is accumulated  
in a space between the forward rotating augers and the back-  
ward rotating augers, thereby causing the snow to adhere to a  
forward rotating shaft and a backward rotating shaft. The  
accumulated snow in the space, therefore, brings disadvan-  
tages to improve efficiency of snow removal.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

An object of the present invention is to provide an auger  
snow blower capable of improving efficiency of snow  
removal.

According to the present invention, there is provided an  
auger snow blower in which right and left forward rotating  
augers configured to rotate from an upper side to a lower front  
side and right and left backward rotating augers configured to  
rotate in a direction reverse to the right and left forward  
rotating augers at the time of snow removal are disposed on a  
same axis and aligned in a width direction inside an auger  
housing, and a blower housing is disposed at a rear portion of  
the auger housing and positioned at a center of the width  
direction, and further a blower is disposed inside the blower  
housing, wherein the right and left forward rotating augers are  
positioned in an entire range of a width of the blower housing,  
and the right and left backward rotating augers are separately  
positioned on both sides of the right and left forward rotating  
augers, and also positioned only at a more outer side than the  
width of the blower housing in the width direction.

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With this arrangement, the snow crushed by the right and  
left backward rotating augers and the right and left forward  
rotating augers is collected at the center of the width direction  
of the auger housing by the right and left forward rotating  
augers, and further sent to an inlet of the blower housing on  
the rear side. The right and left forward rotating augers are  
positioned at least in the entire range of the width of the  
blower housing. Therefore, the snow collected at the center of  
the width direction of the auger housing can be efficiently  
pushed into the entrance of the blower housing by the right  
and left forward rotating augers that rotate forward from the  
upper side to the lower front side. On the other hand, the right  
and left backward rotating augers rotate backward from the  
upper side to lower back side, thereby sending the crushed  
snow to the front side. Here, the right and left backward  
rotating augers are separately positioned on both sides of the  
right and left forward rotating augers, and located only at the  
more outer side than the width of the blower housing in the  
width direction. With this configuration, the snow collected at  
the center of the width direction of the auger housing is not  
pushed out in a direction away from the inlet of the blower  
housing by the right and left backward rotating augers. Thus,  
the snow crushed by the right and left backward rotating  
augers and the right and left forward rotating augers is effi-  
ciently pushed into the inlet of the blower housing, thereby  
achieving to remove the snow efficiently.

Additionally, the right and left forward rotating augers and  
the right and left backward rotating augers mutually rotate in  
the opposite directions. Therefore, upward reaction force  
generated at the right and left forward rotating augers at the  
time of snow removal is cancelled by downward reaction  
force generated at the right and left backward rotating augers.  
As a result, a lifting phenomenon of the right and left forward  
rotating augers can be suppressed, thereby achieving to  
improve stability of snow removal by the auger snow blower.  
Therefore, improvement can be achieved on both efficiency  
and stability of snow removal by the auger snow blower.

Preferably, the right and left forward rotating augers and  
the right and left backward rotating augers are connected to  
respective drive shafts configured to individually drive the  
respective augers by respective shear bolts. By thus individu-  
ally providing the respective augers with the respective shear  
bolts, a load applied to the respective shear bolts can be  
distributed. Therefore, the respective shear bolts can be  
downsized and the shear bolt can be easily changed.

Additionally, the right and left forward rotating augers and  
the right and left backward rotating augers mutually rotate in  
the opposite directions. In the case where rotation of either  
forward rotating augers or backward rotating augers is nearly  
interrupted by some foreign object being stuck at one of the  
forward or backward rotating augers, such a stuck phenom-  
enon of the foreign object can be easily resolved because the  
augers for the other rotation rotate in the reverse direction.  
Accordingly, frequency of changing the shear bolts can be  
reduced because occurrence of the stuck phenomenon of the  
foreign object is suppressed.

Preferably, a forward rotating shaft provided with the left  
or right forward rotating auger, a forward rotation drive shaft  
configured to drive the forward rotating shaft, a backward  
rotating shaft provided with the left or right backward rotating  
auger, and a backward rotation drive shaft configured to drive  
the backward rotating shaft are disposed on the same axis and  
positioned at a front portion of a machine body, the forward  
rotating shaft and the backward rotating shaft are adjacent in  
an axial direction thereof, the forward rotating shaft and the  
forward rotation drive shaft are respectively provided with  
irregular-shaped forward rotation flanges having protrusions

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protruding in a radial direction, the protrusions of the respective forward rotation flanges are mutually connected by a forward rotation shear bolt that can be fractured when subjected to a preset shearing force, the backward rotating shaft and the backward rotation drive shaft are respectively provided with irregular-shaped backward rotation flanges having protrusions protruding in a radial direction, the protrusions of the respective backward rotation flanges are mutually connected by a backward rotation shear bolt that can be fractured when subjected to a preset shearing force, and either the respective forward rotation flanges or the respective backward rotation flanges are positioned in the vicinity of the forward rotating shaft and the backward rotating shaft.

Thus, the protrusions of the respective forward rotation flanges are mutually connected by the forward rotation shear bolt. The drive force transmitted from a power source to the forward rotation drive shaft is transmitted to the forward rotating shaft via the forward rotation shear bolt. Further, the protrusions of the respective backward rotation flanges are mutually connected by the backward rotation shear bolt. The drive force transmitted from the power source to the backward rotation drive shaft is transmitted to the backward rotating shaft via the backward rotation shear bolt. In the case where any foreign object is stuck in at least one of the forward rotating augers and the backward rotating augers, the augers stuck with the foreign object can be protected by at least a part of the respective shear bolts being fractured.

Further, either the respective forward rotation flanges or the respective backward rotation flanges are positioned in the vicinity of the forward rotating shaft and the backward rotating shaft. Therefore, the protrusion positioned at a space between the forward rotating auger and the backward rotating auger rotate together with the forward rotating auger and the backward rotating auger. Further, even when the snow is accumulated in the space between the forward rotating auger and the backward rotating auger at the time of snow removal and causes the snow to adhere to the forward rotating shaft and the backward rotating shaft, the snow accumulated in the space can be crushed by rotation of the protrusion. Therefore, snow adhesion to the forward rotating shaft and the backward rotating shaft can be prevented. As a result, snow can be efficiently removed because snow is prevented from accumulating in the space. Moreover, the protrusion can be formed by the irregular-shaped flange configured to attach the shear bolt. Therefore, the number of components can be reduced because the protrusions do not have to be provided as separate members.

Preferably, the left and right backward rotating augers have an axial width smaller than an axial width of the left and right forward rotating augers. Therefore, the backward rotating auger acts weaker in throwing out the crushed snow to the upper front side. Since throwing out of the snow, namely, leak of snow can be thus reduced, efficiency of snow removal by the auger snow blower can be improved. Further, the lifting phenomenon of the forward rotating auger can be suppressed by the backward rotating auger. Furthermore, since the width in the axial direction of the backward rotating auger is small, the backward rotating auger acts weaker in throwing out the snow to upper front side. Therefore, resistance of the accumulated snow generated by rotation of the backward rotating auger can be reduced at the time of snow removal. Thus, improvement can be achieved on both efficiency and stability of snow removal by the auger snow blower.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the following, preferred embodiments of the present invention will be described in detail based on the attached drawings, in which:

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FIG. 1 is a side view of an auger snow blower according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a schematic view diagrammatically illustrating an auger driving system viewed from a front side of the auger snow blower shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a front elevational view of an auger housing and an auger of the auger snow blower shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a front elevational view showing a substantially right half of a transmission illustrated in FIG. 2;

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of a joining portion of respective forward rotation flanges shown in FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is a view showing the forward rotation flange to which a shear bolt shown in FIG. 5 is attached, viewed from an outer side in an axial direction of the forward rotating shaft;

FIG. 7 is a front elevational view of an auger housing and an auger of an auger snow blower according to a second embodiment of the present invention; and

FIG. 8 is a front elevational view of an auger according to a third embodiment of the present invention.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Certain preferred embodiments of the present invention will be described defining directions of “front”, “rear”, “left”, “right”, “up”, and “down” in accordance with the directions viewed from an operator.

As shown in FIG. 1, an auger snow blower 10 is a self-propelled snow blower including a travel unit 12, a snow removing section 13, and a power source 14 at a machine body 11 (body frame 11). An operating handle 15 extends from a rear portion to an upper rear portion of the machine body 11. The operator can operate the auger snow blower 10 (hereinafter simply referred to as “snow blower 10”) by the operating handle 15, walking along with the snow blower 10.

The snow removing section 13 includes an auger housing 21, a blower housing 22 disposed at a rear portion of the auger housing 21 and positioned at a center of a width direction of the auger housing 21, an auger 23 disposed inside the auger housing 21, a blower 24 disposed inside the blower housing 22, and a shooter 25 extending upward from the blower housing 22.

The power source 14 drives the travel unit 12 and the snow removing section 13 and includes, for example, an engine. Power of the power source 14 is transmitted to the blower 24 through a path passing a drive pulley 31, a driving belt 32, a driven pulley 33, and a transmission shaft 34, and also transmitted to the auger 23 from the transmission shaft 34 via a transmission 35. The snow collected by the auger 23 can be blown away by the blower 24 via the shooter 25. Note that the travel unit 12 may be also configured to be driven by an electric motor.

In the following, the snow removing section 13 will be described in detail. The blower housing 22 is a bottomed cylindrical member having an inlet 22a (opening 22a) on a back surface of the auger housing 21, and mounted on the machine body 11. The blower 24 is mounted on the transmission shaft 34 inside the blower housing 22. An input shaft 61 of the transmission 35 is connected to a tip of the transmission shaft 34. The transmission 35 is positioned inside the auger housing 21.

As shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, the auger 23 includes right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 that rotate from an upper side to a lower front side (in a direction indicated by an arrow Ra), and right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 that rotate in a direction reverse to the right and left forward

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rotating augers **41, 41** (in a direction indicated by an arrow Rb) at the time of snow removal by the snow blower **10** (see FIG. **1**). The left forward rotating auger **41** and the left backward rotating auger **42** are adjacent in an axial direction thereof. The right forward rotating auger **41** and the right backward rotating auger **42** are adjacent in the axial direction.

In the following, the rotary direction of the auger **23** when rotating from the upper side to the lower front side, namely, in the direction of the arrow Ra (anticlockwise direction in FIG. **1**) at the time of snow removal by the snow blower **10** is referred to as "forward rotation". Further, the rotary direction of the auger when rotating in a direction reverse to the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41**, namely, in the direction of the arrow Rb (clockwise direction in FIG. **1**) is referred to as "backward rotation".

The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** (forward rotating auger claws **41, 41**) are belt-shaped members having a predetermined width, formed in a spiral, and disposed at right and left forward rotating shafts **43, 43**. The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** are spiraled in a direction in which crushed snow is collected to the center of the width direction of the auger housing **21** (FIG. **1**) by forward rotation of the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41**.

The right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** (backward rotating auger claws **42, 42**) are belt-shaped members having a predetermined width, formed in a spiral, and disposed at the right and left backward rotating shafts **44, 44**. The right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** are spiraled in a direction in which the crushed snow is collected to the center of the width direction of the auger housing **21** by backward rotation of the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42**.

The right and left forward rotating shafts **43, 43** and the right and left backward rotating shafts **44, 44** are disposed on the same axis (an axial line Xs shown in FIG. **3**), and aligned in the width direction inside the auger housing **21**. In other words, the right and left forward rotating shafts **43, 43** and the right and left backward rotating shafts **44, 44** are mutually disposed on the same axis and positioned at a front portion of the machine body **11** (see FIG. **1**). The left forward rotating shaft **43** and the left backward rotating shaft **44** are adjacent in the axial direction. The right forward rotating shaft **43** and the right backward rotating shaft **44** are adjacent in the axial direction thereof.

The transmission **35** includes right and left forward rotation drive shafts **62, 62** and a single backward rotation drive shaft **63**.

The right and left forward rotation drive shafts **62, 62** are mutually positioned on the same axis and extend in the width direction of the auger housing **21**. The right and left forward rotation drive shafts **62, 62** are formed of pipe shafts rotatably supported at a case **64** of the transmission **35**, and can rotate only in the forward rotating direction Ra by inputting drive force to the input shaft **61**. In other words, the rotary direction Ra of the right and left forward rotation drive shafts **62, 62** is a direction in which the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** are made to rotate forward.

The backward rotation drive shaft **63** extends in the width direction of the auger housing **21**, and is fitted to the right and left forward rotation drive shafts **62, 62** in a relatively rotatable manner, and further projected more outside than the right and left forward rotation drive shafts **62, 62** in the axial direction. The backward rotation drive shaft **63** can rotate only in the backward rotary direction Rb by inputting drive force to the input shaft **61**. In other words, the rotary direction

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Rb of the backward rotation drive shaft **63** is a direction in which the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** are made to rotate backward.

The right and left forward rotation drive shafts **62, 62** are fitted with right and left forward rotation rotary shafts **65, 65** positioned close to the case **64** and the right and left forward rotating shafts **43, 43** positioned distant from the case **64**. In other words, the right and left forward rotation rotary shafts **65, 65** and the right and left forward rotating shafts **43, 43** are formed of pipe shafts (pipe-shaped shafts). More specifically, the right and left forward rotation rotary shafts **65, 65** are connected in a manner whereby both relative axial movement and relative rotation are restricted with respect to the right and left forward rotation drive shafts **62, 62**. The right and left forward rotating shafts **43, 43** are adjacent to the right and left forward rotation rotary shafts **65, 65** on an outer side in the axial direction, and relatively rotatable to the right and left forward rotation drive shafts **62, 62**. The right forward rotation rotary shaft **65** and the right forward rotating shaft **43** respectively include right forward rotation flanges **66, 67**.

As illustrated in FIG. **3**, the blower housing **22** is disposed at the center of the width direction of the auger housing **21**, namely, at a width center CL. The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** and the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** all have the same outside diameter Dg. The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** and the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** all have the same width Lg. The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** and the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** all have the same rotational rate.

The blower housing **22** is formed in a cylindrical shape and has a true circle shape in the front elevational view. Accordingly, the inlet **22a** of the blower housing **22** also has the true circle in the front elevational view. In the front elevational view of the auger housing **21**, a width Wb of the blower housing **22** is identical to a radius of the inlet **22a**.

The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** are positioned symmetrically to the width center CL of the auger housing **21** in the width direction, and also positioned distant from each other by a distance Ls in the width direction. The distance Ls is determined in consideration of snow removing property of the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41**.

The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** are positioned at least in an entire range of the width Wb of the blower housing **22** (range along the width direction of the auger housing **21**). In other words, in the front elevational view of the auger housing **21**, a total length Lt from a left end of the left forward rotating auger **41** to a right end of the right forward rotating auger **41** is equal to or larger than the width Wb of the blower housing **22**. The total length Lt is calculated by adding the distance Ls between the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** to the respective widths Lg, Lg of the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** ( $Lt=Lg+Lg+Ls$ ).

The right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** are positioned symmetrically to the width center CL of the auger housing **21** in the width direction. In other words, the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** are separately positioned on the both sides of the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41**, and also positioned only at the more outer side than the width Wb of the blower housing **22** in the width direction.

The following is a summary of the above description. The snow crushed by the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** and the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** is collected at the center of the width direction of the auger

housing 21 by the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41, and further sent to the inlet 22a of the blower housing 22 on the rear side.

The right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 are positioned at least in the entire range of the width Wb of the blower housing 22. Therefore, the snow collected at the center of the width direction of the auger housing 21 can be efficiently pushed into the inlet 22a of the blower housing 22 by the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 that rotate from the upper side to the lower front side (forward rotation).

On the other hand, the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 rotate from the upper side to the lower back side (backward), thereby sending the crushed snow to the front side. Here, the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 are separately positioned on the both sides of the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41, and also positioned only at the more outer side than the width Wb of the blower housing 22 in the width direction. Therefore, the snow collected at the center of the width direction of the auger housing 21 is prevented from being pushed out in a direction away from the inlet 22a of the blower housing 22 by the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42.

Thus, the snow crushed by the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 and the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 can be efficiently pushed into the inlet 22a of the blower housing 22, and the snow can be efficiently removed.

Also, the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 and the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 mutually rotate in the opposite directions. Accordingly, an upward reaction force generated at the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 can be cancelled by a downward reaction force generated at the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 at the time of snow removal. As a result, a lifting phenomenon of the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 can be suppressed, thereby achieving to improve stability of the snow removal by the snow blower 10.

Additionally, in some locations of the accumulated snow, snow quality is hard like a frozen state. In the case of removing such hard accumulated snow, the lifting phenomenon is likely to occur at the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 because the upward reaction force generated at the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 is large when snow removal is executed simply by traveling the snow blower 10 in a straight line. As a result, the snow blower 10 moves unstably in the width direction, thereby bringing disadvantages to improving straight traveling ability.

To solve such a situation, one-side operation whereby only a left half or a right half of the auger 23 is operated for the accumulated snow is often executed in order to remove the accumulated hard snow while suppressing the lifting phenomenon of the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42. In other words, by executing the one-side operation, the accumulated snow can be sequentially chipped off from one end to the other end by the auger 23.

According to the first embodiment discussed above, the lifting phenomenon of the entire auger 23 by the reaction force can be suppressed because the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 are positioned at the more outer side than the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 in the width direction. Therefore, straight traveling ability of the snow blower 10 can be improved at the time of snow removal, thereby improving stability of the snow removal.

Thus, according to the first embodiment, improvement can be achieved on both efficiency and stability of snow removal by the auger snow blower 10.

As illustrated in FIGS. 2 and 4, the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 and the right and left backward rotating

augers 42, 42 are connected, by respective shear bolts 68, 68, 74, 74, to the respective drive shafts 62, 63 for respective rotations configured to individually drive the respective augers 41, 41, 42, 42.

By individually providing the respective shear bolts 68, 68, 74, 74, a load applied to the respective shear bolts 68, 68, 74, 74 can be distributed. As a result, the respective shear bolts 68, 68, 74, 74 can be downsized and the shear bolts 68, 68, 74, 74 can be easily changed.

Further, the right and left forward rotating augers 41, 41 and the right and left backward rotating augers 42, 42 mutually rotate in the opposite directions. In the case where one of forward or backward rotations, for example, rotation of the forward rotating augers 41, 41 is nearly interrupted by some foreign object stuck at the forward rotating augers 41, 41, the stuck phenomenon of the foreign object can be easily resolved because the other augers 42, 42 rotate in the reverse direction. Therefore, frequency of changing the shear bolts 68, 68, 74, 74 can be reduced by preventing the stuck phenomenon of the foreign object from occurring.

As illustrated in FIGS. 4 and 5, the respective right forward rotation flanges 66, 67 are positioned on side surfaces facing each other in the axial direction of the right forward rotation rotary shaft 65 and the right forward rotating shaft 43, and also superimposed each other in the axial direction. The respective right forward rotation flanges 66, 67 are basically shaped like a disc. More specifically, the respective right forward rotation flanges 66, 67 are so-called irregular-shaped flanges that include protrusions 66a, 67a partly protruding from an outer peripheral surface of the circular disc.

The protrusions 66a, 67a of the respective right forward rotation flanges 66, 67 are mutually connected by one shear bolt 68. The forward rotation shear bolt 68 is a member that can be fractured when subjected to a preset shearing force. More specifically, the forward rotation shear bolt 68 is a member inserted through the respective through-holes 66b, 67b formed at the respective protrusions 66a, 67a (see FIGS. 5 and 6), and configured to fasten the respective protrusions 66a, 67a each other with a nut 69 screwed.

The forward rotation shear bolt 68 partly includes a small-diameter portion 68a. The small-diameter portion 68a is positioned at a mating face of the protrusions 66a, 67a inside the forward rotation shear bolt 68, and has a diameter smaller than other parts of the shear bolt 68. The small-diameter portion 68a is fractured to cut connection between the respective protrusions 66a, 67a in the case where shearing force applied to the small-diameter portion 68a reaches the preset reference shearing force.

As illustrated in FIG. 2, the left forward rotation rotary shaft 65 and the left forward rotating shaft 43 also include left forward rotation flanges 66, 67. The respective left forward rotation flanges 66, 67 have the same configuration as the above-described respective right forward rotation flanges 66, 67, and connected by the forward rotation shear bolt 68.

Note that the right and left forward rotation rotary shafts 65, 65 can be eliminated, and the right and left forward rotation flanges 66, 66 can be directly provided at the right and left forward rotation drive shafts 62, 62. In other words, the right and left forward rotation flanges 66, 66 may be either directly or indirectly provided at the right and left forward rotation drive shafts 62, 62.

As illustrated in FIGS. 2 and 3, the right and left backward rotation drive shafts 71, 71 adjacent to the right and left forward rotating shafts 43, 43 and the right and left backward rotating shafts 44, 44 distant from the right and left forward rotating shafts 43, 43 are fitted to the both axial ends of the backward rotation drive shaft 63. In other words, the right and

left backward rotation rotary shafts **71, 71** and the right and left backward rotating shafts **44, 44** are formed of pipe shafts (pipe-shaped shafts). More specifically, the right and left backward rotation rotary shafts **71, 71** are connected and in a manner whereby both relative axial movement and relative rotation is restricted with respect to the backward rotation drive shaft **63**. The right and left backward rotating shafts **44, 44** are adjacent to the right and left backward rotation rotary shafts **71, 71** on the outer side in the axial direction, and are relatively movable to the backward rotation drive shaft **63**.

The right backward rotation rotary shaft **71** and the right backward rotating shaft **44** respectively include the right backward rotation flanges **72, 73**. The respective right backward rotation flanges **72, 73** are positioned on side surfaces facing each other in the axial direction of the right backward rotating shaft **44** and the right backward rotation rotary shaft **71**, and further mutually superimposed in the axial direction. The respective right backward rotation flanges **72, 73** substantially (basically) have the same configuration as the right and left forward rotation flanges **66, 67**. More specifically, the respective right backward rotation flanges **72, 73** are basically shaped like a circular disc. More specifically, the respective right backward rotation flanges **72, 73** are so-called irregular-shaped flanges that include protrusions **72a, 73a** partly protruding from an outer peripheral surface formed in a true circle (see FIG. 4).

As illustrated in FIG. 4, the protrusions **72a, 73a** of the respective right backward rotation flanges **72, 73** are mutually connected by one backward rotation shear bolt **74**. The backward rotation shear bolt **74** substantially (basically) has the same configuration as the above-described forward rotation shear bolt **68**, and fastens the receptive protrusions **72a, 73a** each other with the nut **75** screwed.

More specifically, the backward rotation shear bolt **74** is a member that can be fractured when subjected to a preset shearing force. In other words, the backward rotation shear bolt **74** partly includes a small-diameter portion **74a**. The small-diameter portion **74a** is positioned at a mating face of the protrusions **72a, 73a** inside the backward rotation shear bolt **74**, and has a diameter smaller than other parts of the shear bolt **74**. The small-diameter portion **74a** is fractured and cuts connection between the respective protrusions **72a, 73a** in the case where shearing force applied to the small-diameter portion **74a** reaches the preset reference shearing force.

As illustrated in FIG. 2, the left backward rotating shaft **44** and the left backward rotation rotary shaft **71** also respectively include the left backward rotation flanges **72, 73**. The respective left backward rotation flanges **72, 73** have the same configuration as the above-described right backward rotation flanges **72, 73**, and connected by the backward rotation shear bolt **74**.

Note that the right and left backward rotation rotary shafts **71, 71** may be eliminated and the right and left backward rotation flanges **72, 72** can be directly provided at the backward rotation drive shaft **63**. In other words, the right and left backward rotation flanges **72, 72** may be either directly or indirectly provided at the backward rotation drive shaft **63**.

As illustrated in FIGS. 2 and 4, either the respective right forward rotation flanges **66, 67** or the respective right backward rotation flanges **72, 73** are positioned in the vicinity of the right forward rotating shaft **43** and the right backward rotating shaft **44**. Either the respective left forward rotation flanges **66, 67** or the respective left backward rotation flanges **72, 73** are also positioned in the vicinity of the left forward rotating shaft **43** and the left backward rotating shaft **44**.

The following is a summary of the above description. Note that only a right half of the auger **23** will be described and

description for a left half will be omitted because the configuration is same as the right half.

The protrusions **66a, 67a** of the forward rotation flanges **66, 67** are mutually connected by the forward rotation shear bolt **68**. The drive force transmitted from the power source **14** (see FIG. 1) to the forward rotation drive shafts **62** is transmitted to the forward rotating shaft **43** via the forward rotation shear bolt **68**. Further, the protrusions **72a, 73a** of the respective backward rotation flanges **72, 73** are mutually connected by the backward rotation shear bolt **74**. The drive force transmitted from the power source **14** to the backward rotation drive shaft **63** is transmitted to the backward rotating shaft **44** via the backward rotation shear bolt **74**. In the case where a foreign object is stuck in at least one of the forward rotating auger **41** and the backward rotating auger **42**, the augers **41, 42** stuck with the foreign object can be protected by at least a part of the respective shear bolts **68, 74** being fractured.

Furthermore, either the respective forward rotation flanges **66, 67** or respective backward rotation flanges **72, 73** are positioned in the vicinity of the forward rotating shaft **43** and the backward rotating shaft **44**. Therefore, the protrusions **72a, 73a** positioned in a space Sp between the forward rotating auger **41** and the backward rotating auger **42** rotate together with the forward rotating auger **41** and the backward rotating auger **42**. Even in the case where the snow is accumulated in the space between the forward rotating auger **41** and the backward rotating auger **42** and causes the snow to adhere to the forward rotating shaft **43** and the backward rotating shaft **44** at the time of snow removal, the accumulated snow in the space Sp can be crushed by rotation of the protrusions **72a, 73a**. Therefore, adhesion of the snow to the forward rotating shaft **43** and the backward rotating shaft **44** can be prevented. As a result, the snow can be efficiently removed because snow is not accumulated in the space Sp. Additionally, the protrusions **72a, 73a** may be formed of the irregular-shaped flanges **72, 73** configured to attach the shear bolt **74**. Therefore, the number of components can be reduced because the protrusions do not have to be provided as separate members.

Next, an auger snow blower **10A** according to a second embodiment will be described based on FIG. 7.

A basic configuration of an auger **23A** of the auger snow blower **10A** according to the second embodiment is same as an auger **23** of an auger snow blower **10** according of the first embodiment. The auger **23A** according to the second embodiment is illustrated having a phase different from the auger **23** according to the first embodiment.

Right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** are positioned close to a center of a width direction of an auger housing **21**, and adjacent each other interposing a transmission **35** positioned at a width center CL. In other words, the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** are positioned at least in an entire range of a width Wb of a blower housing **22** (see FIG. 3).

Right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** are positioned on both sides of the auger housing **21** in the width direction, more specifically, positioned at a more outer side than the width Wb of the blower housing **22** in the width direction (see FIG. 3). In other words, the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** are positioned at the more outer side than the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** in the width direction of the auger housing **21**. The left forward rotating auger **41** and the left backward rotating auger **42** are adjacent in an axial direction thereof. The right forward rotating auger **41** and the right backward rotating auger **42** are adjacent in the axial direction thereof.

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The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** and the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** all have the same outside diameter. The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** have a width  $L_a$  in the axial direction (width of the auger housing **21** in the width direction). The width  $L_a$  is set same as a width  $L_g$  in the axial direction of the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** according to the first embodiment illustrated in FIG. 3 ( $L_a=L_g$ ). The right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** have a width  $L_b$  in the axial direction (width of the auger housing **21** in the width direction). The width  $L_b$  in the axial direction of the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** is smaller than the width  $L_a$  in the axial direction of the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** ( $L_b<L_a$ ). The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** and the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** all have the same rotational rate.

Snow crushed by the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** is collected to the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41**. The collected snow and the snow crushed by the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** are collected at the center of the width direction of the auger housing **21** by the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41**, and further sent to the blower housing **22** on the rear side (see FIG. 1). The snow sent to the blower housing **22** is blown away by a blower **24** illustrated in FIG. 1 via a shooter **25**.

The following is a summary of the above description. The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** that rotate from an upper side to a lower front side and the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** that rotate in a direction reverse to the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** when the snow blower **10A** removes snow are positioned on the same axis and aligned in the width direction inside the auger housing **21**, and also positioned at a front portion of a machine body **11**.

The width  $L_b$  in the axial direction of the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** is smaller than the width  $L_a$  in the axial direction of the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41**. Due to that, the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** act weaker in throwing out the crushed snow to the upper front side. Since throwing out of the snow, namely, leak of snow can be reduced, efficiency of snow removal by the snow blower **10A** can be improved. Particularly, this is effective in the case where a width  $L_h$  of the auger housing **21** is small.

Additionally, the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** and the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** mutually rotate in the opposite directions. Therefore, an upward reaction force generated at the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** can be cancelled by a downward reaction force generated at the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** at the time of snow removal. As a result, a lifting phenomenon of the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** can be suppressed, thereby achieving to improve stability of the snow removal by the snow blower **10A**.

Furthermore, since the width  $L_b$  in the axial direction of the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** is smaller than the width  $L_a$  in the axial direction of the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41**, the backward rotating augers act weaker in throwing out snow to an upper front side. Therefore, resistance of the accumulated snow generated by rotation of the backward rotating augers **42, 42** can be reduced at the time of snow removal.

Thus, according to the second embodiment, improvement can be achieved on both efficiency and stability of snow removal by the auger snow blower **10A**.

Next, an auger snow blower **10B** according to a third embodiment will be described with reference to FIG. 8.

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A basic configuration of an auger **23B** according to the third embodiment is same as an auger **23A** according to the second embodiment, but arrangement of right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** and right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** is changed. The auger **23B** according to the third embodiment is illustrated having a phase different from the auger **23A** according to the second embodiment.

More specifically, the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** are positioned close to a center of a width direction of an auger housing **21** (see FIG. 7), and adjacent each other interposing a transmission **35** positioned at a width center  $CL$ . The right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** are positioned on both sides of the auger housing **21** in the width direction. In other words, the right and left forward rotating augers **41, 41** are positioned at a more outer side than the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** in the width direction of the auger housing **21**. According to the third embodiment, a rotary direction of a transmission **35** illustrated in FIG. 7 is to be set opposite. Note that, according to the third embodiment, at least a part of the right and left backward rotating augers **42, 42** is positioned within a width of the blower housing **22** (see FIG. 1).

As described above, the auger snow blowers **10, 10A**, and **10B** according to the present invention are suitable for a snow blower in which an auger **23** is driven by a power source **14**.

Obviously, various minor changes and modifications of the present invention are possible in light of the above teaching. It is therefore to be understood that within the scope of the appended claims the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described.

What is claimed is:

1. An auger snow blower comprising:

an auger housing;

right and left forward rotating augers configured to rotate from an upper side to a lower front side;

right and left backward rotating augers configured to rotate in a direction reverse to the right and left forward rotating augers at the time of snow removal;

the right and left forward rotating augers and the right and left backward rotating augers being disposed on a same axis and aligned in a width direction inside the auger housing;

a blower housing disposed at a rear portion of the auger housing and positioned at a center of the width direction of the auger housing; and

a blower disposed inside the blower housing, wherein the right and left forward rotating augers are positioned in an entire range of a width of the blower housing,

the right and left backward rotating augers are separately positioned on both sides of the right and left forward rotating augers, and also positioned only at a more outer side than the width of the blower housing in the width direction,

each of the right and left forward rotating augers includes a forward rotating shaft provided with the left or right forward rotating auger, and a forward rotation drive shaft configured to drive the forward rotating shaft,

each of the right and left backward rotating augers includes a backward rotating shaft provided with the left or right backward rotating auger, and a backward rotation drive shaft configured to drive the backward rotating shaft,

the forward rotating shaft, the forward rotation drive shaft, the backward rotating shaft and the backward rotation drive shaft are disposed on the same axis and positioned at a front portion of a machine body,

the forward rotating shaft and the backward rotating shaft are adjacent in an axial direction thereof,

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the forward rotating shaft and the forward rotation drive shaft are respectively provided with irregular-shaped forward rotation flanges having protrusions protruding in a radial direction,

the protrusions of the respective forward rotation flanges are mutually connected by a forward rotation shear bolt that can be fractured when subjected to a preset shearing force,

the backward rotating shaft and the backward rotation drive shaft are respectively provided with irregular-shaped backward rotation flanges having protrusions protruding in a radial direction,

the protrusions of the respective backward rotation flanges are mutually connected by a backward rotation shear bolt that can be fractured when subjected to a preset shearing force,

the protrusions of the respective forward rotation flanges are disposed in a space defined between the left or right forward rotation auger and a transmission disposed between the left and right forward rotation augers, the protrusions being rotatable with the left or right forward

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rotation auger to thereby prevent snow from adhering to the forward rotating shaft, and

the protrusions of the respective backward rotation flanges are disposed in a space defined between the left or right backward rotation auger and an adjacent one of the left and right forward rotation augers, the protrusions being rotatable with the left or right backward rotation auger to thereby prevent snow from adhering to the backward rotating shaft.

2. The auger snow blower according to claim 1, wherein the left and right backward rotating auger have an axial width smaller than an axial width of the left and right forward rotating augers.

3. The auger snow blower according to claim 1, wherein each of the forward rotation shear bolt and the backward rotation shear bolt has a small-diameter portion positioned at a mating face of the protrusions of the forward or backward rotation flanges and having a diameter smaller than other part of the forward or backward rotation hear bolt.

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